

AL-AZIF

WHEN DARKNESS SPEAKS



PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY
MUHYI AL-DIN IBRAHIM

Al-Azif

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Dedication

To those who search in darkness for a glimmer of light,

To those who dare to listen beyond silence,

To every mind unsatisfied with appearances,

And every heart still drawn to mystery.

This book is not a promise of knowledge,

But an invitation to journey into the unknown,

Where questions turn into gateways,

And curiosity becomes a trial of the soul.

If you believe that humankind is greater than what it sees,

And smaller than what it cannot fathom,

Then this journey is for you.

Mohy Ibrahim...

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Prologue:

I have always carried within me a restless passion for the metaphysical realms—a passion that does not seek reckless immersion in strange rituals whose essence I do not fully understand, but rather a cautious longing to comprehend their mysteries. For I have long realized that to practice such rites is either an act of blatant heresy or an invitation to ruin. Thus, my fascination has always remained within the bounds of knowledge: to read, to listen, to question, and to connect fragments of the unknown.

It has been my conviction that knowledge alone suffices to provoke the intellect and to sharpen the imagination. To awaken curiosity is, in itself, to set the mind aflame. And so, my journey into the unseen has never been one of sorcery but of inquiry—an exploration not of summoning but of understanding.

Among the many questions that have occupied my mind over the years, one name has returned again and again, shrouded in whispers and shadows: **Abdullah Al-Hazrad**. I have read much about him, both in

Eastern and Western sources, and I have witnessed how deeply people have been enthralled by this figure. His legend has become a mirror of humanity's own thirst for the unknown.

I confess that what drew me most was not what was clear about him, but rather what remained unresolved, unfathomable, and obscure even to this day. Yet out of all my impressions of this controversial man, one conclusion pressed itself upon me: he was a victim. He entered the realm of the metaphysical not by choice, but as if chosen—compelled by forces he himself could not resist. It was as though the hidden worlds had summoned him to bear witness. And when he wrote down what he had seen and heard, his fate was sealed: death in broad daylight, before the eyes of all, in the great squares of Damascus.

To me, this is not merely the tale of a man, but a tragedy of existence itself: the tragedy of one who approaches too close to truths that no human should hold. Even as I pieced together fragments of his story, gathering from scholars and storytellers alike, I could not shake the sense that Hazrad was less a magician than a

scapegoat—one who bore the weight of knowledge that devoured him.

And yet, despite his dreadful end, Abdullah Al-Hazrad remains—still captivating writers, poets, seekers of the hidden, and dreamers of worlds before humanity. For what he recorded in the eighth century surpasses in sheer imagination and terror much of what our modern age of science and technology has dared to conjure. His visions, far from being limited to demons and monstrous apparitions, unveil realities that eclipse even the most advanced imaginings of contemporary minds. Hazrad is not simply a man; he is a **threshold**. A gateway through which human curiosity forever gazes into the void. He embodies that impulse in us which cannot settle for the surface, but insists on peering into the abyss—no matter the cost.

Thus, I write not out of blind admiration, nor out of condemnation, but from the posture of the sage who sees in Hazrad's life both a lesson and a warning: that knowledge is power, but power may be a curse; that curiosity is the noblest of human traits, but also the most perilous. Between these two poles—beauty and

doom—moves the story of Abdullah Al-Hazrad. It is not merely the biography of a poet, nor merely the chronicle of a sorcerer, but rather the eternal drama of humanity itself, ever striving to pierce the veil of the unknown.

Introduction:

Since the dawn of humankind, there has been a voice that speaks before thought, a whisper that precedes reason. It is not the voice of explanation, but the murmur of awe—the primal tremor that stirred within us when the wind howled in caves, when shadows danced upon stone walls, when the cry of the wolf pierced the stillness of night. From that voice came myths, and from myths came rites, and from rites came the written word. But the essence remained the same: humanity is a creature forever haunted by the mystery that lies beyond the veil of sight.

This restless fascination with what transcends the ordinary has never been a passing fancy, but a defining trait of our species. To live within limits is unbearable; man longs to trespass boundaries, to seek the unseeable, to name the nameless—even if the price is terror, madness, or death.

It is within this eternal passion that a singular figure emerges, a man whose name has become a curse and a myth alike: **Abdullah Al-Hazrad**. Known to his

contemporaries as the “Mad Arab,” he has been remembered across centuries not as a mere poet, but as the author of the most infamous grimoire ever conceived: *Al-Azif*.

He first appeared in the eighth century, in an age of empires and contending faiths, only to unveil a door no one expected: the door to forbidden knowledge, to rites that whispered of worlds older than humanity itself. His book, *Al-Azif*, was said to contain instructions for summoning and communing with beings neither divine nor human, but vast, indifferent presences whose existence renders mankind insignificant.

From that moment onward, Hazrad became a symbol of cosmic dread. He was not simply a mad poet or a heretic mystic; he became an enduring riddle, drawing the curiosity of scholars, poets, and occultists across continents. For even when his works were suppressed, when authorities sought to burn them into oblivion, they returned again and again, like a shadow that no flame can consume.

What is remarkable—perhaps more than anything else—is that people, despite the horrors associated with

his name, have never ceased to seek him. Curiosity outstripped fear. Time and again, men and women dared to look into the abyss he left behind, convinced that the danger was worth the knowledge to be gained. For this is the paradox of humanity: we are drawn to what may destroy us.

Western and Hebrew sources alike portray *Al-Azif* not merely as a book of sorcery, but as a cipher for **cosmic horror** itself: a vision that displaces humanity from the center of existence and sets it trembling before a vast, indifferent universe. Hazrad's text embodies the terror that life may not only be fragile, but profoundly peripheral—that ancient beings, older than earth, still linger beyond perception, waiting for their season to return.

In one of the most haunting translated fragments, we read:

“Man is not the first nor the last of Earth's rulers. The Old Ones were, the Old Ones are, and the Old Ones shall be. Not in the spaces we know, but between them, they walk serene and primal, unseen by us. Yog-Sothoth knows the gate. Yog-Sothoth is the gate, the key, and

the guardian of the gate. Past, present, future: all are one within him. They wait, patient and strong, for their dominion to come again. After summer comes winter, and after winter, summer. They shall rule where men now rule, for they wait eternal.”

Thus, both Hazrad and his *Al-Azif* became symbols—not only of forbidden wisdom, but of the **cosmic dread** that echoes across centuries. They embody the human craving to know what must not be known, and the primeval fear that the truth may annihilate us.

The book you now hold is not merely a biography, nor a tale of superstition. It is an attempt to confront the enigma that has haunted minds for centuries: Who was Abdullah Al-Hazrad? Was he poet or prophet, heretic or martyr, genius or madman? And above all, what did he see that so consumed him, and why does his voice still echo through the corridors of human imagination? There can be no doubt: Hazrad was, and remains, one of the most dangerous and enigmatic figures in the history of the unseen. The man who dared to look upon the abyss without closing his eyes—the man through whom mystery itself still speaks.

Chapter One

Abdullah Al-Hazrad: Between Legend and Memory

To speak of Abdullah Al-Hazrad is to enter a realm where history falters and myth begins to write its own truth. He is not merely a name inscribed in forgotten manuscripts, but a shadow stretching across centuries, evoked by poets, feared by priests, and pursued by those who seek the unseen. His life lies between what can be verified and what resists all verification, suspended like a mirage on the horizon of memory.

The Poet Who Became a Curse

In the earliest accounts, Hazrad appears as a poet of Yemen—celebrated, admired, a voice that carried both beauty and eloquence. He belonged to that ancient tradition in which poetry was not ornament but revelation, a means of grasping reality itself. Yet somewhere in the flow of his verses, a fissure opened: the poet became more than a singer of words; he became a listener to whispers no one else could hear.

What began as the gift of a poet gradually transformed into the mark of the accursed. His fame as “the first poet

of Yemen” shifted into infamy as “the Mad Arab.” It is as if language itself, that delicate tool of the poet, became a gateway to something darker—a path that led not to beauty but to terror. Thus the poet became a curse, and his name forever fused with the forbidden.

The “Mad Arab” in Eastern and Western Imagination

Eastern chronicles often described Hazrad as a man consumed by madness. They spoke of his retreat into deserts, his encounters with unseen beings, his strange mutterings in forgotten tongues. To them, he was a warning: a mind that had flown too close to the sun and had fallen into delirium.

But in Western imagination—especially after translations and reinterpretations of his work—he became more than a madman. He was mythologized as the **Mad Arab**, the archetype of the sorcerer who had gazed upon cosmic truths and paid the price. In this portrayal, madness is not merely illness but initiation, a passage into realities that the sane dare not confront.

Thus, two images converge and diverge: the East sees him as one who lost his reason, while the West venerates him as one who found a truth too vast for

reason to contain. Between these two poles—madness and revelation—Hazrad’s legend persists.

The First Seed of Cosmic Horror

What makes Hazrad singular is not only his life but the vision attributed to him. For in his writings—whether authentic or apocryphal—appears the earliest full articulation of what later thinkers would call *cosmic horror*.

In *Al-Azif*, he spoke not of demons confined to caves or spirits haunting ruins, but of beings primordial and immense, entities that existed before humanity and would exist long after. His words displaced mankind from the center of existence, portraying us as fleeting shadows in a universe ruled by indifferent forces.

This was the first seed of a dread not bound by religion or myth, but by the vastness of existence itself. The horror was no longer that of ghosts in the night, but the realization that the cosmos itself is alien, that the true rulers of being are indifferent to us, and that to know them is to risk annihilation.

Between Legend and Memory

And so, Abdullah Al-Hazrad stands between legend and memory. Was he truly a man of flesh and blood, born in Sana'a, who wandered the Empty Quarter and returned with visions? Or is he a construct of collective imagination, woven from fragments of poetry, fear, and forbidden lore?

Perhaps the answer lies not in choosing one or the other, but in recognizing that Hazrad is both: a man whose life has become a symbol, a name that has transcended its bearer. He is memory distorted into legend, legend crystallized into myth.

In him we see the drama of humanity itself: the poet who sought beauty and found terror, the thinker who reached for knowledge and grasped the abyss. Hazrad is less a person than a mirror, reflecting back to us our own restless desire to pierce the veil.

Chapter Two

Solitude and Vision – The Language that Opens the Gates

When Hazrad vanished into the desert, he stepped into a landscape that was less a place than a crucible. The desert, vast and merciless, strips a man of every illusion. It offers neither comfort nor distraction, only silence—and within that silence, voices. For ten long years, Abdullah Al-Hazrad wandered amidst the sands of the Empty Quarter, a wilderness where mirage and revelation blend.

It was here, according to his own testimony, that the poet became something else. He ceased to be a mere man of letters and became a witness—one who heard whispers carried not by wind, but by presences older than wind itself.

Ten Years in the Desert

The chronicles speak of those ten years as an absence. He was gone from human sight, vanished from the courts of poetry and the gatherings of scholars. Yet within that absence, he claimed presence with beings no man was meant to behold. He listened, he recorded,

he suffered visions that twisted his very mind. And when he emerged again, he no longer belonged to the world he had left.

The desert was not simply a place of exile. It was a furnace in which his soul was broken and remade. His solitude became a threshold: by silence he was opened, and through emptiness he was filled.

The Obscure Rituals

The accounts are shrouded in ambiguity, yet they agree on this: Hazrad did not merely wander; he performed. Alone beneath the stars, he enacted rites whose origins no one could trace. He fasted, he muttered in strange syllables, he inscribed circles in the sand. He claimed that in these rituals he summoned spirits—genii, demons, and beings of nameless form.

Yet the question lingers: were these rituals learned, or given? Was Hazrad the agent of his acts, or merely the vessel of a will not his own? Here begins the ambiguity of his legacy.

Symbols and Seals – Arra, Agha, Bandar

Among the fragments that remain of his writings are references to strange seals: *Arra*, *Agha*, *Bandar*. These were not words of poetry but invocations—glyphs that he claimed to have seen inscribed upon the very fabric of the unseen.

To him, they were not mere symbols but **keys**. Each opened a threshold, each aligned the seeker with powers beyond comprehension. They were not doors in space, but cracks between realities. In naming them, Hazrad set himself at the edge of worlds, with one foot in the human and the other in the inhuman.

Scholars since have debated: were these inventions of a mind unhinged, or fragments of an older language—the primordial tongue of creation itself? No answer has sufficed, for the symbols refuse to die. They reappear in manuscripts, in whispered traditions, in the margins of forbidden grimoires.

The First Testimony – “The Mad Arab’s” Witness

From these years of solitude emerged what came to be called *The Testimony of the Mad Arab*. It was less a

coherent narrative than a torrent of visions: deserts filled with voices, skies alive with watchers, gates that trembled at the edge of perception.

He spoke of “the Old Ones” who preceded humanity and who wait to return. He described their forms not as shapes but as presences—vast, amorphous, unbearable to the eye. He insisted that the desert was not empty, but populated by legions of the unseen, moving silently between the grains of sand.

Here, Hazrad’s voice is caught between wisdom and madness. Was he a sage unveiling truths that reason rejects, or a madman lost in hallucination? The ambiguity cannot be dissolved. For even if madness, it was madness that struck a chord deep within the human psyche—a chord that still resonates.

Knowledge or Pact?

The final question is the most unsettling. Did Hazrad derive his authority from knowledge—painfully acquired through solitary encounter—or from a darker pact? Was he a student of the unknown, or its servant?

His testimony leaves no clear answer. The very possibility that knowledge itself may demand allegiance, that to know is to be bound, haunts every page of his writings. It is here that his story becomes more than biography: it becomes a parable. For in Hazrad we see the eternal drama of man—seeking wisdom, finding abyss, and never knowing whether the abyss was chosen or choosing.

Chapter Three

Damascus and the Writing of *Al-Azif*

If the desert was Hazrad's crucible, Damascus was his stage. It was there, in that ancient city of scholars and mystics, that the poet-turned-seer began to transcribe what he had heard and seen during his years of exile. The city that once crowned poets now became the birthplace of the most feared book in human memory: *Al-Azif*.

The Terrifying Rituals Surrounding Its Composition

Accounts of Hazrad's life in Damascus are filled with whispers of strange nights. Neighbors told of flickering lights behind shuttered windows, of chanting in tongues unknown, of incense thick with odors that did not belong to earth. They claimed to hear voices answering him—some deep, some shrill, none human.

It was said that Hazrad did not write in daylight but in hours when the city slept. His ink was not always ink; sometimes it was blood, sometimes a mixture that glowed faintly under the moon. He would draw circles upon the floor, place objects at their edges—stones,

bones, fragments of herbs—and then write feverishly, as if taking dictation from unseen presences.

The work was not composition but transmission, not invention but revelation. Hazrad, it seems, believed himself to be not the author but the scribe of voices older than mankind.

Language of Magic – Blood as Ink

The text of *Al-Azif* resists ordinary description. Its sentences twist, its grammar fractures, as if language itself were breaking under the weight of what it seeks to convey. Readers have long noted that the words do not simply inform; they conjure. To read them is to feel watched, to sense a presence hovering between lines.

Hazrad himself, in fragments of testimony, admitted that the words were alive. He claimed that he did not write them, but that they wrote themselves through him.

Some pages bore traces of stains that scholars later insisted were human blood. Others seemed to have been scorched at the edges, as if the words burned even as they were formed.

Here lies the essence of *Al-Azif*: it is less a manuscript than a living entity. Each line is both record and invocation, history and spell.

The Book as a Living Entity

Unlike other grimoires, *Al-Azif* does not disguise its intent. It presents itself not as allegory but as **threshold**. Those who hold it do not merely read—they participate. The text insists upon its own vitality, demanding that the reader recognize it not as paper and ink, but as a mouth through which the unseen speaks.

In Damascus, whispers grew. Some said Hazrad was guarded by spirits who walked the streets at night. Others swore that shadows lingered longer around his dwelling, and that no bird flew above his roof. Fear grew alongside curiosity. Scholars condemned him as heretic; seekers approached him in secret, longing for a glimpse of his forbidden pages.

And yet, despite condemnation and danger, Hazrad pressed on. He completed his work, a volume whose pages would outlive empires.

A City Bearing Witness

It is no small irony that Damascus, city of saints and scholars, became midwife to such a work. For centuries it had been a crossroads of faith, philosophy, and mysticism. Perhaps it was inevitable that it should also become the birthplace of a book that dissolved the boundaries between them all.

In Damascus, *Al-Azif* was not simply written—it was **born**. And with its birth, Hazrad's fate was sealed. For no man could conjure such a text and hope to escape the consequences.

Chapter Four

The Fate of the Book – From Damascus to the World

No book, however forbidden, remains confined to its birthplace. Once written, *Al-Azif* began its perilous journey beyond the walls of Damascus, spreading whispers that no fire nor edict could silence. Its pages, fragile yet enduring, carried both fascination and dread. To trace its fate is to follow a path of translation, suppression, destruction, and survival—a path as mysterious as the book itself.

Dissemination and Translations

After Hazrad's death, his manuscript circulated among a small circle of scholars, mystics, and seekers of forbidden knowledge. At first, it was dismissed by some as the ravings of a mad poet. Yet curiosity overcame disdain, and soon copies were made. Each copy altered the text, whether intentionally or through the distortions of terrified scribes.

By the twelfth century, fragments of *Al-Azif* appeared in Antioch and Alexandria. By the thirteenth, translations into Greek surfaced under the title

Necronomicon—“The Book of Dead Names.” This name, though foreign to Hazrad’s tongue, captured the essence of what the book had become: a catalogue of forbidden lore, a register of the inhuman.

From Greek it passed into Latin, then into the languages of Europe. Each translation bore the scars of its time: marginal notes from trembling monks, diagrams hastily erased, entire chapters excised under threat of excommunication. And yet, even mutilated, the text endured.

The Vatican and the Great Burning

No institution feared the book more than the Vatican. Papal decrees in the fifteenth century ordered the seizure and burning of every known copy. Public bonfires consumed manuscripts while clerics proclaimed victory over the devil’s work.

But what is burned is not always destroyed. Survivors whispered of hidden volumes locked away in secret archives, too dangerous to be released yet too valuable to be utterly annihilated. The Vatican, while denouncing the book, may have preserved it—whether for study, control, or fear.

The irony remains: the very attempt to erase the book only amplified its legend. To prohibit is to provoke desire. And so *Al-Azif* grew in shadow, acquiring the aura not only of terror but of immortality.

The Surviving Copy – The Legend of Forbidden Knowledge

By the modern era, scholars spoke of only a handful of extant manuscripts. Some in Greek, some in Latin, and one—most ominous—rumored to be in the original Arabic. That last copy, it is said, disappeared without trace, perhaps hidden in the vaults of an unnamed collector. Others claim it rests still in the Vatican, unseen for centuries.

Meanwhile, in the twentieth century, a strange story emerged: that the English writer H.P. Lovecraft, who made *The Necronomicon* infamous in fiction, had himself seen a copy—or at least fragments. Some insist that he possessed an English translation and passed it secretly into private hands. If true, then the book's shadow stretches not only through medieval monasteries but into the pens of modern horror.

Thus, the legend persists: that a single true copy remains, waiting. Not accessible to libraries, not entrusted to scholars, but guarded, hidden, perhaps in expectation of a time when the world itself will be ready—or doomed—to read it.

Al-Azif as a Philosophical Science-Fiction Tale

To follow this history is to watch a story unfold like a film, shifting between eras and languages, between fire and secrecy. It is less the history of a text than the history of humanity's uneasy relationship with forbidden knowledge.

Al-Azif is, in one sense, a manuscript. In another, it is a mirror. It reflects the unending struggle between the human thirst for understanding and the terror of what such understanding might bring. Each translation, each burning, each whispered rumor adds another layer to the myth. The book is at once dead and alive, destroyed and preserved.

And so its fate continues. From Damascus to the libraries of Europe, from bonfires to private collections, *Al-Azif* has never ceased to be. Like the entities it

describes, it waits between worlds—unseen, patient,
eternal.

Chapter Five

Abdullah Al-Hazrad – Criminal or Victim?

To speak of Abdullah Al-Hazrad is to confront a paradox. Was he a prophet of forbidden truths or merely a deranged poet lost in his own visions? Was he the architect of terror, or was he himself crushed beneath the weight of knowledge that no human was meant to bear? His life and death refuse simple judgment, leaving us with the eternal question: was he criminal—or victim?

The Burden of Vision

Al-Hazrad claimed to have seen what others could not. In the deserts, he heard voices that spoke not in metaphor but in revelation. To write *Al-Azif* was not, in his mind, an act of invention but of testimony. He was not conjuring; he was recording. The horrors inscribed in his book were not creations of a fevered mind but encounters with realities beyond human sight.

Here lies the dilemma: if his visions were real, then he bore the unbearable burden of being chosen. If they

were delusions, then he was condemned by madness. In both cases, the weight destroyed him.

The Double Edge of Knowledge

Philosophers through the ages have warned of the double nature of knowledge: it illuminates, but it also burns. Al-Hazrad sought light, but what he found was fire. He pierced the veil between worlds, but the truth that seeped through blinded rather than enlightened.

Was he guilty for seeking? Or innocent for being consumed? Humanity has always revered its prophets and reviled its heretics, but Al-Hazrad stands uneasily between the two. He gave voice to forces beyond, and for that, he was condemned.

Death in Damascus

His end is as ambiguous as his life. Accounts tell of a monstrous apparition devouring him in broad daylight, in the heart of Damascus. Was it metaphor—a dramatization of his ruin? Or was it literal, the revenge of entities he dared to name?

If the latter, then Al-Hazrad was not executioner but victim. He trespassed upon sacred thresholds, and the

guardians struck him down. In his death, he fulfilled the fate of one who gazes too deeply into the abyss: the abyss gazed back.

Prophet, Madman, or Martyr?

What, then, shall we call him? A madman, for sure, to dare what he dared. A criminal, perhaps, for unleashing words that could drive readers to despair. But also a martyr, in the deepest sense: one who bore witness to what most cannot, and who paid with his life.

The philosopher sees in him not merely a man but a parable. Al-Hazrad embodies the eternal human temptation to know, to cross boundaries, to open forbidden doors. He is the figure of Prometheus, who stole fire from the gods and was punished eternally. He is also Icarus, whose wings melted when he flew too close to the sun.

Between Silence and Voice

And yet, the greatest irony is this: though silenced by death, his voice continues. *Al-Azif* survives, whether in fragments, translations, or myth. The man is gone, but the testimony remains.

In this lies the riddle of Al-Hazrad. He is both criminal and victim, prophet and heretic, madman and sage. To judge him is impossible; to ignore him, equally so. His name, whispered still after centuries, proves that the thirst he embodied—the thirst to know what lies beyond—can never be extinguished.

Conclusion:

In the end, what remains is not merely the tale of one man, but the reflection of a truth as old as humanity itself: **we are not alone in the cosmos**. The universe is vast, indifferent, and filled with mysteries we cannot grasp. Our limited vision, our fragile senses, are not failures—they are the very gift that allows us to endure. There is wonder in not-knowing. There is beauty in the boundaries of perception. For if we saw all that lay beyond, our minds would break under the weight. The unseen is both terror and mercy: a veil that shields us from annihilation even as it beckons us toward forbidden knowledge.

Curiosity is the noblest of human flames, yet it is also the most perilous. To seek what lies hidden is to step onto a path where every answer breeds a greater question, and where the final revelation may not liberate but destroy. Thus, **curiosity is both the ladder to wisdom and the gate to ruin**.

Al-Hazrad walked too far along that path. He sought the ultimate horizon, and in so doing, became both

warning and legend. His fate tells us that the abyss does not forgive those who stare too deeply. Yet his voice also reminds us that the abyss is there, waiting, shaping the silence of the stars.

And so mankind will continue. Always searching, always questioning, forever drawn toward the fire even as it scorches the hand that reaches. We will call this impulse adventure; at times, it will be nothing less than suicide. But it is what makes us human—the unquenchable desire to break the seal of the unknown.

Perhaps wisdom lies not in conquering the hidden but in revering it. To know that mystery is not our enemy but our companion. To recognize that our limits are not chains but guardians. For beyond them lie immensities we are not yet able to endure.

Thus the story of Abdullah Al-Hazrad is not only the chronicle of a man but the parable of a species. He reminds us that to live is to dwell between silence and revelation, between fear and wonder. And in that fragile balance, humanity continues its journey through the cosmos—ever seeking, ever trembling, ever alive.

Postscript:

A Marginal Note Beyond the Conclusion

There are lives that refuse to be confined to the narrow corridors of history, and among them stands the haunting figure of Abdullah Al-Hazrad. His name, shrouded in the dust of centuries, continues to disturb the imagination of scholars, poets, and seekers of the forbidden. He is not remembered merely as a poet of Yemen or as a wanderer in the deserts; he is remembered as the author of *Al-Azif*, the most notorious grimoire ever whispered of, a book that has outlived its own flames of suppression.

But who was this man, really? Was he an ambitious poet who sought fame beyond the bounds of verse, or was he chosen—against his will—by voices older than humankind, compelled to record their secrets? The chronicles differ, the rumors multiply, and what remains is not certainty but an expanding aura of myth.

The Veil of Birth and Origins

Historical accounts are uncertain, deliberately obscured perhaps by those who feared what truth might entail.

Some claim he was born in Sana'a during the Umayyad era, around the year 700 CE. Others, in confusion or distortion, place his existence as late as the nineteenth century. The truth dissolves into legend. What is certain is that Al-Hazrad was of noble lineage, raised in comfort, orphaned of his father at a young age, and nurtured by his mother.

In his youth, he was a poet of renown, hailed as “the first poet of Yemen.” His verses, now mostly lost, were said to combine the sensual and the cosmic, the earthly and the abyssal. Yet fame in poetry was not enough. As he entered his thirties, the path of verse yielded to another, darker vocation.

The Madness of Vision

Accounts say that at thirty, a change overtook him—a hunger for knowledge beyond mortal reach. He became convinced that to understand the present, one must commune with the past; to see the future, one must pierce the veil of forgotten epochs. Thus began his descent—or his ascent—into the desert, where he wandered for ten years.

It was in the Empty Quarter, the Rub‘ al-Khali, that Al-Hazrad claimed to have spoken with beings unbound by time. He insisted that the desert was not empty at all, but teeming with voices, presences, and watchful eyes. He learned from them, he said, the hidden architecture of history: epochs erased, civilizations drowned, and gods who walked the earth before mankind’s first dawn.

Madness, say his detractors. Revelation, whisper those who sense more. For ten years, he recorded, memorized, and prepared the words that would one day form *Al-Azif*.

The Writing of *Al-Azif*

Returning to Damascus, Al-Hazrad began to write. But his work was unlike any other. He did not compose; he transcribed. Neighbors spoke of chanting through the night, of flames that flickered without fuel, of shadows moving where no man walked. His ink was sometimes blood, his pages sometimes scorched at the edges as if burned from within.

The book he produced was not merely a text but a phenomenon. Its language twisted itself around the

mind, defying grammar, summoning dread. Readers said the words themselves breathed; that to read was to conjure, to awaken presences that lingered just beyond sight.

And so the book acquired its name: *Al-Azif*—a word that in Arabic refers to the nocturnal sound of insects, but which in Hazrad's tongue meant something deeper: the howling of unseen beings at the edges of human perception.

Suppression and Survival

The fate of the book was as dramatic as its birth. From Damascus it spread in secret, copied by trembling hands, translated into Greek as the *Necronomicon*, into Latin, and beyond. Wherever it traveled, it provoked dread. Scholars annotated it in margins before destroying their own notes in terror. Monks hid fragments, while rulers burned entire volumes in bonfires.

The Vatican took a decisive role, declaring the book heretical, ordering its seizure and incineration. And yet whispers persist that the Church itself kept a copy,

hidden deep within secret archives. For if the book was mere madness, why guard it so fiercely?

Over time, nearly all copies vanished. By the modern age, rumors spoke of a single surviving manuscript, perhaps in Arabic, perhaps in translation. Some say H.P. Lovecraft himself glimpsed it, drawing upon it for his tales of cosmic horror. Others claim it remains locked in a private collection, passed secretly from hand to hand, guarded not for scholarship but for survival.

Death of the Author

Al-Hazrad's death mirrored the terror of his work. One account insists that in broad daylight, in the heart of Damascus, he was seized by an inhuman creature, devoured before witnesses, and vanished into nothingness. Others say he was strangled in secret by those who feared his revelations. Either way, his end was violent, abrupt, and fitting of the legend he left behind.

Was this vengeance from the entities he had dared to name? Or was it the punishment of men who could not

allow his words to spread? In either case, his death sealed his transformation from man to myth.

The Eternal Question

What, then, are we to make of Abdullah Al-Hazrad? Was he a charlatan, exploiting superstition to gain renown? Was he insane, tormented by hallucinations? Or was he truly a vessel of forbidden knowledge, chosen to bear witness to realities beyond the veil of human senses?

If he was a deceiver, then his deception outlasted centuries, capturing the imagination of cultures far removed from his own. If he was mad, then his madness was prophetic, for it revealed patterns of terror and awe that resonate with humanity's most primal fears. And if he was a prophet, then his prophecy was unbearable: that man is not master, but intruder, in a cosmos filled with indifferent and ancient powers.

A Symbol Beyond a Man

To dwell on Al-Hazrad is to dwell on ourselves. He represents the human hunger for knowledge, the willingness to risk ruin for the sake of one more

glimpse behind the curtain of mystery. He is Prometheus stealing fire, Icarus flying too close to the sun. His crime, if crime it was, was curiosity without restraint. His punishment, if punishment it was, was to become the very warning he ignored.

Thus Al-Hazrad remains, centuries after his death, less as a man than as a mirror. He reflects the paradox of humanity: the same thirst for truth that elevates us also endangers us. The same curiosity that builds civilizations can open gates we cannot close.

Closing Reflection

To read of him is to stand at a threshold. Beyond it lies terror and wonder, illumination and madness. Some will call him a criminal; others, a victim. Perhaps he was both. Perhaps he was neither.

But one truth remains unshaken: Abdullah Al-Hazrad, poet of Yemen, scribe of the desert, author of *Al-Azif*, will never be forgotten. His shadow lingers still, whispering to those who dare listen. And in those whispers lies the eternal riddle of mankind's place in the universe: not sovereign, not central, but trembling at the edge of immensities we cannot yet endure.

About the Author



Mohy El-Din Ibrahim

An Egyptian writer, journalist, and critic, Mohy El-Din Ibrahim graduated from the Faculty of Engineering, Cairo University, before devoting himself fully to literature and the arts. Since 1989 he has written for the Egyptian stage, specializing in musical drama and political theatre, with acclaimed works such as *El-Nagda Ya Hoh* and *Aalam Kora*.

After studying journalism and media in the United States (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), he combined critical insight with creative vision, producing documentaries for Nile TV on the legendary actor El-Sayed Bedeir, and for Al Jazeera on the iconic comedy troupe *Tholathy Adwa' El-Masrah*.

He is the recipient of the **Arab Theatre Award in Playwriting (1989)** and the **Third International Prize for Political Song (1996)**. His writings blend philosophy with Sufism, affirming that mystery is never the end of knowledge, but its true beginning.